



Town of Rowe  
**Board of Selectmen** Minutes  
Tuesday, October 13, 2020 –4:00 p.m.  
VIA TELECONFERENCE

*This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law due to the COVID-19 pandemic.*

**Board of Selectmen:** Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Joanne Semanie  
**Absent:** Selectman Ed Silva  
**Administrative Staff:** Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III, Administrative Assistant  
**Other Attendees:** Board of Health Chair Margaret Rice  
**Audience of Citizens:** Ben Werner, Director of Rowe Camp and Conference Center

**Call to Order:** Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 4:15 P.M., a quorum of the board present via remote participation.

**MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:**

**Chair Sokol:**                      **yes**

**Silva:**                                **absent**

**Vice-Chair Semanie:**        **yes**

**Background:** This group of individuals (self-titled "Covid Group") has been meeting weekly for the past few months to listen to the state Covid-19 briefings and discuss ongoing matters in town related to the pandemic. As Board of Health Clerk Joanne Semanie was elected last Saturday to the Board of Selectmen, there is now a quorum of the board present during these weekly meetings, and as such, must take place in open session.

**Covid Discussion:** The following points/topics were addressed during discussion:

Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice provided the following updates:

- The Nurse position candidate looked promising for a potential November start date
- There was discussion about people refusing to wear masks at the Refuse Gardens

**The following message was prepared for the Public Notification System:**

"Good Evening Rowe Residents,

The following is the weekly message regarding the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Topics include a reiteration of points made on previous calls, including information about mail-in ballots for the general

election, an update regarding the seasonal flu vaccination clinics, and an update regarding the current community-level risk of COVID-19 in Rowe.

The option to vote in the general election via absentee ballot, which presents fewer potential exposure risks than voting in person, is available for anyone who would rather vote by mail than come in-person to vote. Voting via this method is safe and secure, and those votes will be counted along with and via the same process as all in-person ballots cast on election day. Absentee ballots applications are available in a folder at the entrance of the town hall. Alternately, ballot applications can be obtained on the town website at [Rowe-ma.gov](http://Rowe-ma.gov) or by contacting the Rowe Town Clerk at 413-339-5520 ext. 14, or via email at [townclerk@rowe-ma.gov](mailto:townclerk@rowe-ma.gov)

The turnout for the two recent local flu clinics was very high. The Rowe Coronavirus Task Force wants to express sincere gratitude to those who attended either flu clinic, and to those who have or plan to get vaccinated at their pharmacy or physician's office.

The next flu clinic hosted semi-locally will be held at the Mohawk Trail Regional High School from 10 AM to noon on October 28th, which will be a drive-through clinic. The vaccinations provided at this clinic will be at no cost to residents of Rowe, although please bring your insurance information as the cost of the vaccination will be reimbursed by your insurer to the Town of Rowe.

To receive a vaccination at this flu clinic, certain routine paperwork must be filled out. This paperwork is available at the town hall, the transfer station, and on the town website at [Rowe-MA.gov](http://Rowe-MA.gov), specifically in the "Latest News" section, which can be found on the left side of the main page just below the featured photos.

Although much of our attention is currently dedicated to the Coronavirus, it is important to remember that the seasonal flu can lead to serious complications, including hospitalization. Given that hospitalization may both increase exposure to the Coronavirus, and may deplete already strapped hospital resources, it is in the interest of each of us individually and collectively to do what we can to avoid the seasonal flu through vaccination.

The State of Massachusetts is maintaining data for community-level COVID-19 risk. Currently, the Town of Rowe is rated as a low-risk community due to our low incidence of infection and transmission. This is a product of our collective efforts to maintain social distancing and to wear masks while in public. As a reminder, it is these cloth face coverings, along with diligent hand washing and maintaining 6-foot distancing, that have allowed us to reduce the incidence of Coronavirus transmission as much as we have. Relaxing these practices may lead to greater virus transmission locally.

The Rowe Coronavirus task force continues to meet regularly and is staying informed about the current state of the Coronavirus pandemic and the effect of the pandemic on the Town of Rowe.

We will continue to keep you updated on these and other coronavirus topics on an on-going basis, typically with weekly updates or when prudent.

Thank you and stay healthy”.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:29 p.m. The motion was seconded by Selectman Semanie.**

**MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:**

**Chair Sokol:**                      **yes**

**Silva:**                                **absent**

**Vice-Chair Semanie:**    **yes**

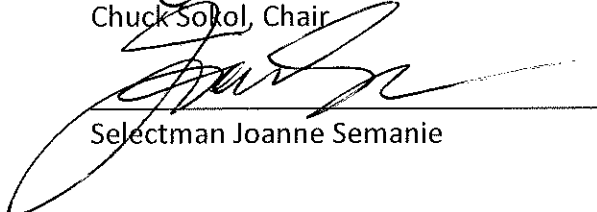
Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: *OCTOBER 29, 2020*

Approved:

  
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Chuck Sokol, Chair

  
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Selectman Joanne Semanie

**Documents:**

- Agenda October 13, 2020